

PUBLIC  
BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HARFORD COUNTY  
MINUTES OF MONDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2023

*The information included here provides a summary of the agenda items presented and actions taken during the above meeting of the Board of Education of Harford County. The video recordings of the Board meetings are the official record of the meetings and can be viewed at: <http://www.hcps.org/boe/livestream/>. Informational reports are located at: <https://www.hcps.org/boe/boardmeetingschedules.aspx>*

Open Session

The Board of Education of Harford County met in open session in hybrid format in person and via video teleconference on Monday, December 4, 2023. President Aaron Poynton called the meeting to order at 5:01 PM

Board Members Present

All Board members were present with the exception of Miss Madina Sabirova, who was absent.

In-person attendance: Mrs. Diane Alvarez, Ms. Carol Bruce, Mrs. Terri Kocher, Dr. Carol Mueller, Mrs. Denise Perry, Mr. Wade Sewell, Ms. Lauren Strauss, Mrs. Melissa Hahn, and Dr. Aaron Poynton.

Motion, Second and Vote

Mrs. Hahn made a motion to waive public comment in its entirety in light of the limited nature of the open session. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Kocher and approved in a voice vote of 9-0. Miss Sabirova was absent.

Pursuant to Section 3-305(b)(9) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, and upon a motion by Mrs. Hahn, seconded by Mrs. Kocher and approved in a voice vote 9-0, the Board of Education of Harford County met in closed session in a hybrid fashion. Miss Sabirova was absent.

Closed Session

Board Members Present

All Board members were present with the exception of Miss Sabirova, who was absent.

In-person attendance: Mrs. Diane Alvarez, Ms. Carol Bruce, Mrs. Terri Kocher, Dr. Carol Mueller, Mrs. Denise Perry, Mr. Wade Sewell, Ms. Lauren Strauss, Mrs. Melissa Hahn, and Dr. Aaron Poynton.

Staff Present:

Dr. Sean Bulson, Superintendent  
Dr. Eric Davis, Chief of Administration  
Dr. Mae Alfree, Director of Staff and Labor Relations  
Eric Clark, Director of Budget  
Deborah Judd, Assistant Superintendent for Business Services  
Kimberly H. Neal, General Counsel  
Daniel Reimers, Human Resources Staff and Labor Relations Specialist  
Ben Richardson, Assistant Director of Human Resources  
Yvonne Rallo, Administrative Assistant and Recording Secretary

In-person attendance: Dr. Sean Bulson, Dr. Eric Davis, Dr. Mae Alfree, Kimberly Neal, Esq., Mr. Daniel Reimers, Mr. Ben Richardson, and Mrs. Yvonne Rallo

Virtual attendance: Mr. Eric Clark and Ms. Deborah Judd

The Board of Education met in closed session for the purposes of discussing:

Topic: Discussion and possible decision regarding parameters for negotiations with bargaining units.

Reason for Closed Session: To maintain confidentiality of potential parameters, if any, of negotiation with bargaining units and discussions related thereto.

Mr. Ben Richardson, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, introduced Dr. Mae Alfree, Director of Staff and Labor Relations who discussed proposed bargaining parameters for the Board's consideration. Mr. Richardson, Dr. Alfree, Ms. Deborah Judd, Assistant Superintendent for Business Services, Mr. Eric Clark, Director of Budget, Mr. Dan Reimers, Human Resources Staffing Specialist, were available to answer the Board's questions. Dr. Alfree sought the Board's direction and approval to proceed with the recommendations as presented and discussed.

Motion, Second and Vote – Mrs. Alvarez made a motion giving Dr. Alfree approval to proceed with the recommended revised negotiation parameters as presented for specific bargaining units. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Hahn and approved in a voice vote of 9-0. Miss Sabirova was absent.

#### Adjournment

With no further business, Mrs. Hahn motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Sewell, and with Board consensus, the closed session adjourned at 5:25 PM.

#### Business Meeting

##### Call to Order / Roll Call

President Aaron Poynton called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Roll call was taken. All Board members were present.

In-person attendance: Mrs. Diane Alvarez, Ms. Carol Bruce, Mrs. Terri Kocher, Dr. Carol Mueller, Mrs. Denise Perry, Miss Madina Sabirova, Mr. Wade Sewell, Ms. Lauren Strauss, Ms. Melissa Hahn, and Dr. Aaron Poynton.

##### Adoption of Agenda

President Poynton called for a motion to adopt the agenda.

Motion, Second and Vote – Mrs. Hahn made a motion to adopt the agenda. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Alvarez and adopted in a voice vote of 10-0. (Includes 1 preferential affirmative student member vote).

##### Pledge of Allegiance

Vice-President Hahn led the Pledge of Allegiance

##### Board Member Comments

Board member comments were provided.

##### Public Comments

Speakers were invited to the meeting to provide their comments for the record either in-person or virtually. President Poynton read a statement regarding protocol for public comments which included a provision that each speaker would have three (3) minutes to speak and speakers representing a group would have five (5) minutes to speak. Mrs. Yvonne Rallo, Board of Education Administrative Support Coordinator, called on individual speakers who were in person at the meeting and had registered to speak at the Board meeting. The following nine (9) people registered and provided in-person public comment: David Bauer, Jacob Bennett, representing the group "Harford County Council", Cynthia Poper, Suzie Scott, representing the group "Moms for Liberty Harford County", Charley Hicks, William Martino, Nonie Czajka, Kathleen Khoury, and Christina Lanocha. Ms. Jillian Lader, Manager of Communications, called on individual speakers who had pre-registered to provide public comments virtually. The following one (1) person registered to provide virtual public comment: Patrick Grant.

##### Old Business

President Poynton announced no "Old Business" was scheduled for discussion.

##### Recognition – Resolution for Service on the Ethics Panel of the Harford County Board of Education

President Poynton recognized Dr. Dennis Golladay for his years of service on the Board of Education's Ethics Panel. A copy of the resolution is attached to this meeting's minutes.

Motion, Second and Vote – Dr. Mueller made a motion to enter the resolution on the record. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Hahn and approved in a voice vote of 10-0. (Includes 1 preferential affirmative student member vote).

Item A. Consent Agenda

President Poynton called for a motion to approve the consent agenda as follows:

1. Contract Award: Consulting and Technical Services
2. Contract Award: Public Address Systems
3. Minutes of Previous Board Meetings: October 16, 2023 and October 23, 2023

Motion, Second and Vote – Ms. Bruce made a motion to approve consent agenda items number two (2) and three (3). The motion was seconded by Dr. Mueller. The consent agenda was approved for the following numbered items: “2. Contract Award: Public Address Systems,” and “3. Minutes of Previous Board Meetings: October 16, 2023 and October 23, 2023”, in a voice vote of 10-0. (Includes 1 preferential affirmative student member vote).

Consent Item #1 Contract Award: Consulting and Technical Services

Motion, Second and Vote – Ms. Bruce made a motion to approve consent agenda item number one (1) “Contract Award: Consulting and Technical Services”. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sewell. The motion was approved in a roll call vote of 9-1. Casting the negative vote: Mrs. Alvarez (Includes 1 preferential affirmative student member vote).

Meeting Break

The Board recessed until they were called back to order by President Poynton.

New Business

Item B. Presentation on Addressing the Needs of Students with Dyslexia

Ms. Colleen Sasdelli, Director of Special Education, Ms. Kimberly Heeter, Coordinator of Special Education, Ms. Elizabeth Thatcher, Teacher Specialist, Christina Carpenter, Teacher Specialist, and Ms. Lauren Stouten, parent of Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) student with Dyslexia, provided the Board a presentation on addressing the needs of students with dyslexia. The presentation provided an overview of the screening, intervening, and progress monitoring that takes place to identify students in grades K-2 who are at risk for reading difficulties. Identification of a specific learning disability by the Individual Education Program (IEP) team was addressed and a review was shared of the structured literacy programs utilized throughout HCPS to address the needs of students identified with dyslexia.

No formal action was taken by the Board.

Item C. Decision on FY 2025 Local Capital Improvement Program

The Board received a sixth presentation for FY 2024 Capital Improvement Program from Mr. Cornell Brown, Assistant Superintendent for Operations, Ms. Patti Jo Beard, Executive Director of Facilities Management, Mr. Chris Morton, Supervisor of Planning and Construction, and Ms. Missy Valentino, Facilities Planner. They reviewed the local only funding needs as identified by Harford County Public Schools’ (HCPS) stakeholders. These needs include, but are not limited to, technology refresh; the purchase of replacement buses; and projects to meet the most critical compliance, security, facilities, and educational requirements of HCPS. The presentation reviewed the FY 2025 CIP process and the final FY 2025 CIP needs. Board approval was sought for the local FY 2025 Capital Improvement Program budget request in the amount of forty-nine million, four hundred ninety-six thousand, five hundred dollars and zero cents (\$49,496,500.00) for submission to Harford County government.

Motion, Second and Vote – Ms. Bruce made a motion to approve the Superintendent’s recommendation to approve the local FY 2025 Capital Improvement Program budget request in the amount of forty-nine million, four hundred ninety-six thousand, five hundred dollars and zero cents (\$49,496,500.00) for submission to Harford County

government. The motion was seconded by Dr. Mueller and approved in a voice vote of 10-0. (includes 1 preferential affirmative student member vote).

Item D. Presentation on 2023 Enrollment Projections

Mr. Cornell Brown, Assistant Superintendent for Operations, Ms. Patti Jo Beard, Executive Director of Facilities Management, Mr. Chris Morton, Supervisor of Planning and Construction and Ms. Missy Valentino, Facilities Planner provided the Board a presentation of the data and process of developing enrollment projections. They provided information on school capacities and development within Harford County. The data revealed that the September 2023 total enrollment was 38,106. This figure equates to 39 more students when compared to last year's enrollment. The elementary school enrollment was 17,858 (65 more students), the middle school enrollment was 8,493 (60 less students), and the high school enrollment was 11,391 (53 more students). These enrollment totals include the 139 students enrolled at the Harford Academy and 402 students enrolled at the Swan Creek School eLearner program and 87 students enrolled in the alternative education program. Last year's total enrollment projection for 2023 was 38,357; actual enrollment was 251 students less than projected. The presented data will be provided to Harford County and Maryland State to be utilized for planning purposes.

No formal action was taken by the Board.

Item E. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Bulson's report was provided as follows:

Superintendent Bulson congratulated Old Post Road Elementary School for being recognized as the November 2023 Family Friendly School.

Superintendent Bulson made the community aware that the Havre de Grace community held their holiday parade and tree lighting on Friday, December 1, 2023, and Havre de Grace students participated in the events and were represented.

Superintendent Bulson reminded the community that Monday, December 11, 2023 the Board is holding an "Engage for Education Listening Session" at Patterson Mill High School from 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm for all Harford County Public Schools staff.

Adjournment

With no further business and with Board consensus the meeting adjourned at 8:51 PM.

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Sean W. Bulson, Ed. D.  
Superintendent of Schools and Secretary-Treasurer

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Aaron S. Poynton, D.P.A.  
President, Board of Education of Harford County

## **RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, there is, as provided by law, a Board Ethics Panel which implement the Board Ethics Policy.

**WHEREAS**, Board Ethics Panel members do not receive compensation for their services.

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Dennis Golladay volunteered his time and service as a member of the Board Ethics Panel.

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Dennis Golladay was essential to the proper and effective functioning of the Board Ethics Panel.

**NOW WHEREFORE**, the Board of Education of Harford County extends its sincere gratitude and thanks to Dr. Dennis Golladay, for the services he rendered as a member of the Board Ethics Panel.



BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HARFORD COUNTY  
NOTICE OF PUBLIC COMMENT PARTICIPATION  
MONDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2023

Attachment

**OPEN SESSION: 5:00 PM – 5:05 PM**

This meeting will be conducted virtually with no public attendance due to the brief nature of this meeting and the logistical issues regarding allowing public attendance in advance of the 6:00 PM meeting.

\*The only item the Board will consider during this open meeting is consideration of meeting in a closed session.

**CLOSED SESSION: 5:05 PM – 5:45 PM**

**BUSINESS MEETING: 6:00 PM – ADJOURNMENT**

This meeting will be conducted in a hybrid fashion and public attendance will be permitted as explained below:

**DOORS WILL OPEN AT 5:50 PM AND THE MEETING WILL BEGIN AT 6:00 PM**

The Board of Education of Harford County will hold a hybrid Business Meeting on Monday, December 4, 2023, at 6:00 PM in the Board Room of the A.A. Roberty Building with Board Members, staff, and presenters in attendance both virtually and in-person. Seats will be available on a first come-first served basis. The meeting will be streamed live and archived for later viewing on the HCPS [Website](#).

**Public Comment Participation Call-In and In-Person Process**

Individuals or groups recognized by Harford County Public Schools (i.e. – PTAs, unions, and other school system stakeholders) wishing to speak on an agenda item or to comment on an education-related matter not on the agenda may request to do so by sending an email to [publiccomment@hcps.org](mailto:publiccomment@hcps.org) or calling 410-588-5347.

Call-In Registrations must be received by 12:00 PM on Monday, December 4, 2023. All fields on the registration form must be completed.

1. First and Last name / if speaker is a Group Representative, then please state the name of the Group
2. Local Address
3. Email Address
4. Phone Number
5. Agenda item or subject your Public Comment pertains to
6. Will you provide in-person **or** virtual Public Comment
7. Registration forms are limited to one (1) per person

***\*Failure to provide complete information as required above will void the request to provide Public Comment.***

- Registered virtual speakers will receive an email from HCPS with a Call-in Phone # and a Conference ID #.
- Registered speakers are required to call-in and enter the conference ID# at 6:00 PM on Monday, December 4, 2023.
- **Important:** If you are unable to take your phone off mute, you may need to dial \*6.
- If you are admitted from the virtual lobby to the meeting, you will be greeted by an HCPS staff member when it is time to begin your public comment. Expected hold time in the virtual lobby may vary based on number of registered speakers. The maximum wait time in the lobby is 30 minutes; should you be disconnected please call back.
- "Request to Appear Before the Board" cards will be available for in-person attendees prior to the Board Meeting for sign-up and must be submitted prior to the opening of the meeting.

**The Board has authorized public comment in accord with its policy [Public Participation at Board Open Meetings or Public Hearings](#) and as summarized below:**

- Each speaker shall be limited to no more than three (3) minutes and five (5) minutes for individuals representing groups. Speakers must state his or her name, and, if representing a group, must identify the group he or she represents. If a speaker identifies themselves as a representative of a group, then only one (1) representative from the group may provide comment for the identified group.
- The Board presiding officer may reduce the amount of time allocated to each speaker if allocating 3 minutes to each speaker will impede the Board's ability to complete scheduled business.
- The Board will receive in-person public comment first and virtual public comment second. The Board expects that all comments will be submitted with the decorum and respect appropriate to the conduct of public business.
- Topics such as personnel matters, pending appeals, specific student disciplinary matters or which constitute commercial solicitations are not permitted.
- Disparaging comments, personal attacks, and inflammatory remarks about specific schools, personnel, any person, or group are not permitted. Speakers who engage in these comments will be reminded of the rules and the Board reserves the right to remove the speaker. In addition, public comment is an opportunity for members of the community to address the Board of Education. Please direct your comments to the Board and not to other members of the public in the audience.
- All public comments submitted will be part of the records maintained by the Board office.

**Speakers are reminded that public comments are considered public information and, as such, are subject to the Maryland Public Information Act.**